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Annual ministerial review: strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development

Statement submitted by Legião da Boa Vontade, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2007/100 and Corr.1.

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Statement

INTRODUCTION

In contribution to the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) and to the Forum on Cooperation for Development, the Legião da Boa Vontade - Legion of Good Will, Brazilian organization in general consultative status, since 1999, with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), presents its recommendations to the Heads of State, Ministers and Ambassadors of several member countries of the UN and to all the other participants of the substantive session of the 2007 High Level Segment of the above mentioned Council, in Geneva, Switzerland. The information gathered in this document are results of a broad mobilization of multistakeholders promoted by the LGW in Latin America, with the objective of sharing the good practices of several social actors and identifying models among them, in order for them to be integrated in the development agenda of the United Nations, in special, that they be implemented for the accomplishment of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Founded in Brazil on January 1, 1950, Legião da Boa Vontade - Legion of Good Will has developed, for over half a century, a great variety of socioeducational programs and projects that currently render more than 5.7 million assistances per year to people and families in less favored situations all over the Country. Under the mission proposed by its President, José de Paiva Netto, of "Promoting Education and Culture with Spirituality, so that there may be Food, Health and Work for all, in the formation of the Ecumenical Citizen", the LGW has demonstrated the capacity of accomplishment of the organized civil society and has expanded its humanitarian actions, which have ramifications in several areas, as in the combat against poverty, guaranteeing the rights of the child and adolescent, empowerment of women, creation of jobs and increase of income, protection for the senior citizen, network articulation, promotion of health and of the Culture of Peace, etc. In the last two decades, it has exported social technologies to six countries, structuring autonomous bases of permanent action in Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, Portugal and the United States of America.

Invited by the NGO Section of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA) and considering the issues of highest relevance for the sustainable development of the countries where it acts, the LGW, for the fourth consecutive year, has been the mobilizing and gathering agent of other social organizations, working to provide the integration of different initiatives and thoughts. For such purpose it created and articulates the Solidary Society Network, formed by hundreds of civil society organizations, academia, private sector, media and government. From this innovative practice emerged the possibility of conciliating the energy and the results of the activities of the multistakeholders with the new functions of the ECOSOC, especially on the issues referring to the Annual Ministerial Review, which has within its objectives to evaluate progresses and spread successful international mechanisms.

In this sense, the Legion of Good Will presents the results obtained with the realization of the 1st Solidary Society Network Innovation Fair, a set of initiatives developed from January to April 2007, mobilizing in regional and national levels almost one thousand leaderships around the theme "Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnerships for development". The activities were carried out by a staff of 125 experts from the LGW and 140 volunteers throughout the Country and abroad, following an integrated plan of actions - shown below with its respective results.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Phase 1 – Participation of the LGW in the Information Session on the AMR Innovation Fair, organized by the NGO Section of the UN/DESA, in the UN Headquarters in New York, on February 23, 2007.

Results:

a) Presentation to the United Nations and other international organizations of its work plan for the realization of the 1st Solidary Society Network Innovation Fair, sharing the steps of its accomplishment as good practices to be replicated.

b) Video of the event held in New York used for divulgation to hundreds of participants of the 1st Solidary Society Network Innovation Fair, in Latin America.

Recommendations:

a) Foster the dissemination of successful Innovation Fairs already held, encouraging its reproduction in all the United Nations member countries, above all, those in development.

b) Encourage and support the creation of spaces for participative and democratic discussions, with the presence of producers of codified knowledge (the academia) and of tacit knowledge (the communities), of the Legislative and Executive Powers and of private companies, for the exchange of experiences, methods and sharing of good socioeconomic practices capable of eradicating poverty and hunger in the world.

Phase 2 – National survey through questionnaires answered by e-mail or by attending the events, which answers reflect the level of participation of the NGOs in all Brazilian States and identify the social demands and offers, as well as the innovative social technologies that are at this moment producing positive and replicable results.

Results:

a) 930 organizations answered the survey. From these, 26% have their actions relatively turned to the area of education; 15% work with human rights; 14% with the creation of jobs and increase of income; 14% with health; 8% with environment; and 8% with digital inclusion, adding to a total of 85%. The remaining 15% have their activities in other areas such as gender, violence, etc.

b) From all the participating NGOs, 49% focus their assistance on children and adolescents, which brings us to the conclusion that NGOs belonging to this percentage, even if they act in other areas, like health, sports, etc., are connected to education, seen that the actions aimed towards this public invariably include socioeducative activities.

c) The answers also indicate a concentration of social demand in the areas of creation of jobs and increase of income (17%); health (13%); and violence, education and housing (11%).

d) Regarding the social offer, the greatest percentages are in the area of education (21%); sports and leisure (13%); health (12%); jobs and income (8%) and housing (8%).

e) Another important data to consider is that, in average, less than 30% of the NGOs surveyed have their registration of public utility by the municipal, state and/or federal governments.

Recommendations:

a) The result of the survey justifies the incentive for the formation of networks that facilitate actions turned to the strengthening the performance of the organized civil society organizations, like training them for management and instruct them so that they may plead the titles and certificates given by the different levels of government, fundamental for the establishment of partnerships, agreements, etc.

b) Encourage greater government integration with the civil society organizations for the implementation of actions directed towards child-adolescent education, segment in which the focus of most of the organizations surveyed are concentrated.

c) Encourage the replication of socioeducational programs that promote sustainable development, as for example of the Legion of Good Will's program ***It is urgent to reeducate!*** that works on the transformation of the individual by strengthening the family bonds and ecumenical moral and spiritual values, indispensable for the practice of the common good.

Phase 3

- **workshops** held in the Brazilian cities of Aracaju/SE, Belo Horizonte/MG, Porto Alegre/RS, Santos/SP and in Argentina, in the city of Buenos Aires, gathering leaderships from government, private sector and civil society, for the presentation of the video on the AMR Innovation Fair, invoking them as participating partners for the realization of other editions of the Solidary Society Network Innovation Fair, along the year 2007, in these places;

- **1st Solidary Society Network Innovation Fair**, with forums in the Brazilian cities of Brasília/DF, São Paulo/SP and Rio de Janeiro/RJ, with the presentation of panels on the main theme, sharing of success stories, display of social technology and exhibition of different cultural manifestations on the subject, such as a painting exhibition entitled "Make the Difference", in which eight renowned plastic artists portrayed the Millennium Goals, donating their works for an itinerant exhibition throughout Brazil and abroad; theatrical presentations staged by the students of the José de Paiva Netto Educational Institute; and musical and dance manifestations of partner organizations.

Results:

a) Strengthening of the Solidary Society Network, with an increase of sharing of successful social practices and institutional relationship amongst stakeholders (national and local governments, boards, companies, academia, organizations of technical support and from the other organized civil society), having, especially in Brasília, the presence of senators, federal and district deputies and several representatives of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Powers, who showed interest in joining efforts, making alliances and concrete partnerships in the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals.

b) Opportunity for dialogue between the organizations present and the representative of the UN/DESA, for the explanation of the requirements necessary to become part of the ECOSOC.

c) Opportunity of dialogue between the representative of the UN/Desa with students of the International Relations course of a respected Brazilian university with philanthropic character, for the explanation of the relationship between the UN and the Civil Society.

d) Capacity of articulating partnerships for combined actions, as it was shown in the health and citizenship activities presented as a success story in the city of Rio de Janeiro, which gathered 14 organizations rendering 2,135 assistances in the areas of health, hygiene, labor market guidance, legal assistance, cultural activities, etc, at the Educational, Cultural and Community Center of the LGW.

e) Massive mobilization of the means of communication in all the cities where the 1st Solidary Society Network Innovation Fair was held, resulting in 20,200 insertions in radio stations; 400 insertions on TV stations; 70 publications in newspapers and 240 publications in websites.

Recommendations:

a) Encourage the realization during 2007-2008 of an Innovation Fair-like event in each of the five Brazilian regions, with the effective participation of the States/provinces that make up these regions.

b) Strengthening of the Culture of Peace and the solidary sustainable development, with basis on the human, social and spiritual progress of all, so that the results necessary for each locality may be reached.

CONCLUSION

When we talk about the eight Millennium Development Goals, proposed by the United Nations to be accomplished by the year 2015, according to an agreement made by the 191 member states that signed the document in the year 2000, we see that it is an important chapter of a new globalized mentality that emerges, electing the Human Being as the main axle of the world's scenario. The Legion of Good Will is happy to be part of this change of culture, especially because, since its appearance in the end of the 1940s, it fights against hunger and extreme poverty through the understanding and the Fraternity among the peoples, platforms of construction of this ideal time that we all long for.

Thanks to the long experience acquired in almost six decades, the Organization believes that, to have a better future, you cannot think of continuity of Life forgetting about a transformation of conscience. And this does not mean that you have to hinder progress. On the contrary. As the President of the LGW, José de Paiva Netto, who is also a journalist, a radio broadcaster and a writer defends: *"For some time we have been calling attention to the fact that Solidarity today has expanded from the bright field of ethics and presents itself as a strategy for the Human Beings to ensure their survival. To the globalization of misery we counterpose the globalization of Fraternity, that spiritualizes the economy and solidarily disciplines it, as a powerful instrument of reaction to the pseudofatalism of poverty"*.

The Legion of Good Will, in this opportunity, greets with enthusiasm, each and everyone who, idealistically, were gathered in the 1st Solidary Society Network Innovation Fair and joins hands with all those interested in fomenting the socioeconomic development of our planet in sustainable bases. Joined the efforts of those of Good Will, we will have a better world for everyone.